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E.O. 12958: DECL: 01/14/2018  
TAGS: [PGOV](#) [PREL](#) [GM](#) [IR](#)  
SUBJECT: IRAN: MFA DETAILS EXPULSION OF GERMAN DIPLOMAT BY  
IRIG

REF: A) 07 BERLIN 2241 B) 07 BERLIN 2222

Classified By: Political Minister Counselor Jeffrey Rathke for reasons  
1.4(b)/(d)

¶1. (C) SUMMARY: MFA contacts have confirmed press reports that Iran expelled a German diplomat in early January. MFA officials note that the Iranian decision took place after a December 2007 German magazine article revealed the German government's July 2007 expulsion of an Iranian diplomat accused of attempting to procure proliferation-sensitive goods. German officials have expressed their dismay to the Iranian government over the IRIG's public comments on the case; the Iranian side has blamed the Mujaheddin-e Khalq for "setting up" the Iranian diplomat. MFA contacts surmise that the expulsion's timing is due to pressure from other Iranian elites on the Iranian MFA to act following the article's publication. END SUMMARY.

¶2. (S) MFA Iran Desk Officers confirmed press reports that a German diplomat was expelled by the Iranian regime in late December during a January 10 meeting with Political Counselor and Iranwatcher. As reported in ref A, the MFA expected such reciprocal action after the German weekly "Der Spiegel" published an article in December detailing the expulsion of an Iranian diplomat in July 2007 who reportedly sought to procure proliferation-sensitive items (ref B). The German Embassy in Tehran was informed on December 18 that it had one week to decide whether or not to allow the return of the Iranian diplomat to Germany. On December 25, the Iranian MFA informed the German Embassy that they would expel First Secretary for Political Affairs/Press Officer Alexander Jung.

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Senior Iran Desk Officer Deike Potzel noted that Jung's selection appeared random and was apparently made by the Iranian MOIS. She noted that the choice of the relatively junior Jung was surprising, as the Germans had expected a German intelligence officer to be expelled. Jung was given until January 4 to depart Iran and was not granted an extension requested by the German Embassy.

¶3. (C) Potzel said that German officials, including State Secretary Reinhard Silberberg, have shared their dismay with

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Iranian interlocutors over the IRIG's public statements on the matter, particularly the Iranian MFA spokesman's January 6 public statement that Jung was expelled for "undiplomatic behavior." The Iranians retorted that the Iranian diplomat in question had been innocent and was set up by the Mujaheddin-e Khalq (MEK), which has a large presence in Germany. When asked about the timing of the Iranian decision, Potzel surmised that the magazine article brought the July expulsion to the attention of regime insiders, resulting in pressure upon the Iranian MFA to act. Potzel added that the Iranians may have intended to reciprocate

earlier on their diplomat's expulsion, but chose to avoid risking the planned GOG release of convicted "Mykonos Affair" assassin Kazem Darabi, who was released by German authorities and deported to Iran in mid-December.

14. (C) When asked if the German MFA plans to replace Jung quickly, Potzel said that the MFA is not actively searching for a successor. While unfortunate that Jung's portfolio will be left empty during the run-up to the Majles election, she added that the MFA did not want to go "begging" to the Iranians for a visa for Jung's replacement.

TIMKEN JR